

Message Text

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73

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAB-01 AID-20 DRC-01 /120 W

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R 211620Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9571

INFO GOV PANCANAL

USCINCSO

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 0398

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PN PFOR

SUBJECT: TORRIJOS' STATEMENT ON TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

REF: USCINCSO 182016Z JAN 74

SUMMARY. EMBASSY WISHES TO CORRECT IMPRESSION GIVEN IN REFTEL THAT TORRIJOS WAS REFERRING TO HIS RECENT TALKS WITH AMBASSADOR BUNKER IN SAYING PANAMANIAN HAD LOST FAITH IN NEGOTIATIONS. HE WAS REFERRING TO A HISTORICAL SITUATION, AND INDICATING THAT UNILATERAL ACTIONS BY THE U.S. WERE NECESSARY TO RESTORE THE FAITH OF THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE. TORRIJOS HAS SAID ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS RECENTLY THAT WITH BUNKER AND KISSINGER HIS FAITH IN NEGOTIATIONS HAS BEEN RESTORED. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY BELIEVES AS REPORTS FROM BUENOS AIRES INTERPRETED BY USCINCSO PANAMA ROUNDUP 182016Z JAN 74 COULD RESULT IN MISUNDERSTANDING OF TORRIJOS' POSITION CONCERNING THE RECENT TALKS WITH AMBASSADOR BUNKER. AS INTERPRETED IN THE REFERENCED REPORT, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT TORRIJOS HAD REFERRED TO THE RECENT TALKS WITH BUNKER IN SAYING THAT "THE RECENT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS ENDED WITHOUT MEANINGFUL RESULTS," WHEREAS TORRIJOS
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WAS REFERRING TO THE LAST ROUND OF CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS,

NOT HIS TALKS WITH BUNKER. BOTH SIDES HAD AGREED THAT THE LATTER WERE PRELIMINARY TALKS, NOT NEGOTIATIONS FOR A CANAL TREATY.

2. TORRIJOS IN BUENOS AIRES WAS REPEATING WHAT HE HAD SAID A NUMBER OF TIMES IN THE PAST: "AFTER YEARS OF NEGOTIATIONS, IN WHICH THERE WERE NO RESULTS, OUR PEOPLE LOST FAITH IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. THAT IS WHY THE UNITED STATES WAS ASKED TO TAKE SOME UNILATERAL MEASURES...SO THAT OUR PEOPLE WOULD RECOVER FAITH IN THE NEGOTIATIONS." HE HAS SAID PUBLICLY AND IN PRIVATE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS SINCE THE RESUMPTION OF TALKS WITH BUNKER THAT HE HAD RECOVERED FAITH IN NEGOTIATIONS-- BUT THE SO-CALLED UNILATERAL GESTURES WERE NECESSARY TO RESTORE FAITH IN THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE.
SAYRE

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